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Single Mothers and their struggles

People think being a single mother is easy, because all the government assistance they receive. In all reality it’s mostly the single mothers who face more struggles. Being a single mother they have to deal with depression. They also have to face the thought of homeless ness, and having to deal with barriers that are put up between them and their child. Kevin J. Swick and Reginald Williams wrote an article over “The Voices of Single Parent Mothers Who our Homeless: Implications for Early Childhood professionals. In this article they speak on the topic about single homeless mothers. These single mothers talk about the barriers they have to overcome when not only being single, but homeless as well.

You never know how it feels to be homeless until you experience it yourself. You have some homeless mothers who have firsthand on it all. I believe a lot of single mothers are homeless because of education, and not having the right education it is going to be hard to find a job. Especially in today society, most jobs want you to at least have a high school diploma, and to have a good job you have to most likely have a college degree, even then you have to find a job that you can actually qualify. In Kevin article it proves my logic thought on this situation right when he discusses about how a single mother could become homeless because of different reason. “It could either be because of economically, history, socially, emotionally, or educationally”. (Swick and Williams, 2010) It gives us an inside voice of actually women that been through homelessness, also how single mothers who have loss connection with their kids because of their situation. It discusses how barriers are put up between the child and a mother and how it could be because of multiple reasons on why their homeless. In some situations it is because a single mother lacks education, even though the government offers programs it is still hard to raise a child and continue to do class. Other reasons that there could be single mothers because of their demographics this meaning that they were never married and lack literacy skills. They also couldn’t find any type of employment. Family structure could also lead to a mother being homeless. After moving from one friend house to another or close family members they become homeless; also putting up barriers between the mother and the child. Swick and Williams never states the woman name but they made sure her voice was heard, and how it’s not already hard enough being a single mother, but to be homeless can be a burden on someone. You can only put yourself in a single mothers shoes to only really know the pain she has to go through. Raising a child isn’t easy, raising one on your own is even harder. (Swick and Williams, 2010)

While growing up I had a best friend who lived across the street from me. Though we were both best friends we had different life styles. I was raised by my grandparents and never had to worry about a thing. While on the other hand she was raised by a single mother. Not only was she raised by a single mother but she had a brother and a sister. We both played sports and every year we had to buy a new pair of shoes, though for me it was easy; but it was hard on her. She didn’t have money every time we had to buy new shoes, but our coach found a way. While reading “The Ballad of a Single Mother” by Lynn Olcott she agrees with that being a single mother is hard by getting a point of a view from a single mother of two boys. Who had to face the same challenges as my friend mom did. She had to struggle with trying to let her son enjoy extra circular activities, because she didn’t have the funding. In the article she talks about a mom who son wanted to play soccer but she didn’t have the money, because some men realize how talented he was they put forward the money and her son was able to play. (Lynn, 2006) My coach did that for my friend every year, not only did he do that for her but for anybody who couldn’t come up with the money. If we didn’t have people like this in the world how much harder would it be? Maybe I wouldn’t have had a chance to really get to know her cause basketball is what brought us close together. For a single mother to have to say no to a kid because they don’t have the funds could be one of the hardest things ever. Not only is it hard to say no to your kid but to miss out of the big events in their lives. Olcott tells about how the single mother had to miss a lot of moments like the first day they started walking or even helping her son get toilet trained. Though her child care sitter wrote notes about everything that her child did it wasn’t anything compared to actually being there. (Lynn, 2006) Olcott states how the single mother couldn’t even take her own kids to the doctor for something as simple as an ear infection. This was simple because she couldn’t afford to miss any work, because her working was the only way she could pay for her son college or even keep them insured. Even trying to put one of her sons through pre-school was a toll on her because it took up half of her pay just for her to do that. Though she struggle she did say that the program she was in did help with some assistance. (Lynn, 2006)

Financial needs on a single mother are big burdens, but to have to deal with depression along with it is even harder. Most depression can happen because they might be facing a challenge of not having something, or struggling with some hardship in life. This hardship could include worrying about money or even how you’re going to support your child and his/her needs. Ann Peden, etc. even did a study showing that “The stress from the child, family, and even money needs or boyfriend can push a single mother to have suicidal thought or depression”. (Peden et al., 2004) In 2002 they did this study that indicated that most single mothers with a child between the ages of two and six suffer a more stressful and depressing stage. “Each woman completed a survey that included the Center for Epidemiologic Studies-Depression Scale, the Beck Depression Inventory, the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale, the Crandall Cognitions Inventory, and the Everyday Stressors Index.” (Peden et al., 2004) More than 75 percent of these women served in the mild depression range. This study was to test the symptoms of low-income mothers who had children in that particular age group.

Once a mother is face with the challenge of having to raise a child on their own, and dealing with situations in her life, she might not realize the hurt it is doing on the child. Having to move from place to place and worrying about money problems can not only effect the mother, but the child as well. Swick and Williams support my theory on this by stating that barriers are put up between a mother and her child because family structure. “This includes loss of a stable home and moving from to different places. They could even be going back and forth from a family, friend, or even shelter to stay”. (Swick and Williams, 2010) “Demographics could also play a role in this case because a mother is worried so much on employment status” (Swick and Williams, 2010) which results in her she not spending much time with the child, this meaning loss of a stable home and moving from place to place. Going from one shelter or house to another can be hard not only on the mother but the child as well.

The struggle of a single mother seems to worsen day by day. This is including jobs not offering enough benefits. Some single mother having to work more than one job just to get by. Even though some single mothers are working more than one job and paying all the bills, they still have little left over and sometime none left over. With most single mothers not working at jobs that pay good wages, it makes it even harder on them. Even the single mothers working multiple jobs they have too still live from paycheck to paycheck. If a single mother has more than one child then that also mean she have more mouths to feed. Renee Lee agree when she states that, many single mothers work in jobs that don’t pay much and doesn’t offer sick leave or even flexible hours. (Lee, 2012) She talks about even with low wages, limited public assistance and insufficient child care subsidies make it really hard for many single mothers to improve their lives. These women are more likely to face hardship or face with issues like eviction. (Lee, 2012) Lee does an interview on a single mother by the name of Morris. Morris expresses how she has a hard time being a single mother and working multiple jobs and yet she could barely pay the bills. Though Morris graduated from college she can’t find a job that could let her use her degree. To top it off Morris had three boys to think of. Sometimes she had to make decisions on whether or not they were going to eat or if she was going to pay the bill. (Lee, 2012) So even though Morris had three jobs she still had to live from paycheck to paycheck just to support her and her children. Even though she was a single mother who was struggling she wasn’t receiving any government assistance to help her out with her children. It’s not only bad for Morris after the recession it was calculated that 41 percent of homes loss where single mother homes. (Lee, 2012) That means almost half of the people who became homeless where single mothers. Though recession hurt a lot of people with the cut back of jobs, and homes being loss it truly affected the single mothers.

So it makes you wonder if single mothers have it as good as people think, or if maybe it’s the opposite do they have it worse. They face more than any other family, like the struggles of homelessness, depression and even the barrier between them and their children. Studies have even shown how single mother struggle more than the average family. There may be a lot of government assistance out there for single mothers, but does that really prove they have it easier? In order for that single mother to even receive that government assistance they have to be qualified. Being a single mother doesn’t automatically make them qualified to receive government assistance. This is what happens in Morris case I stated earlier, she worked multiple of jobs and was a single mother but could never get government assistance.